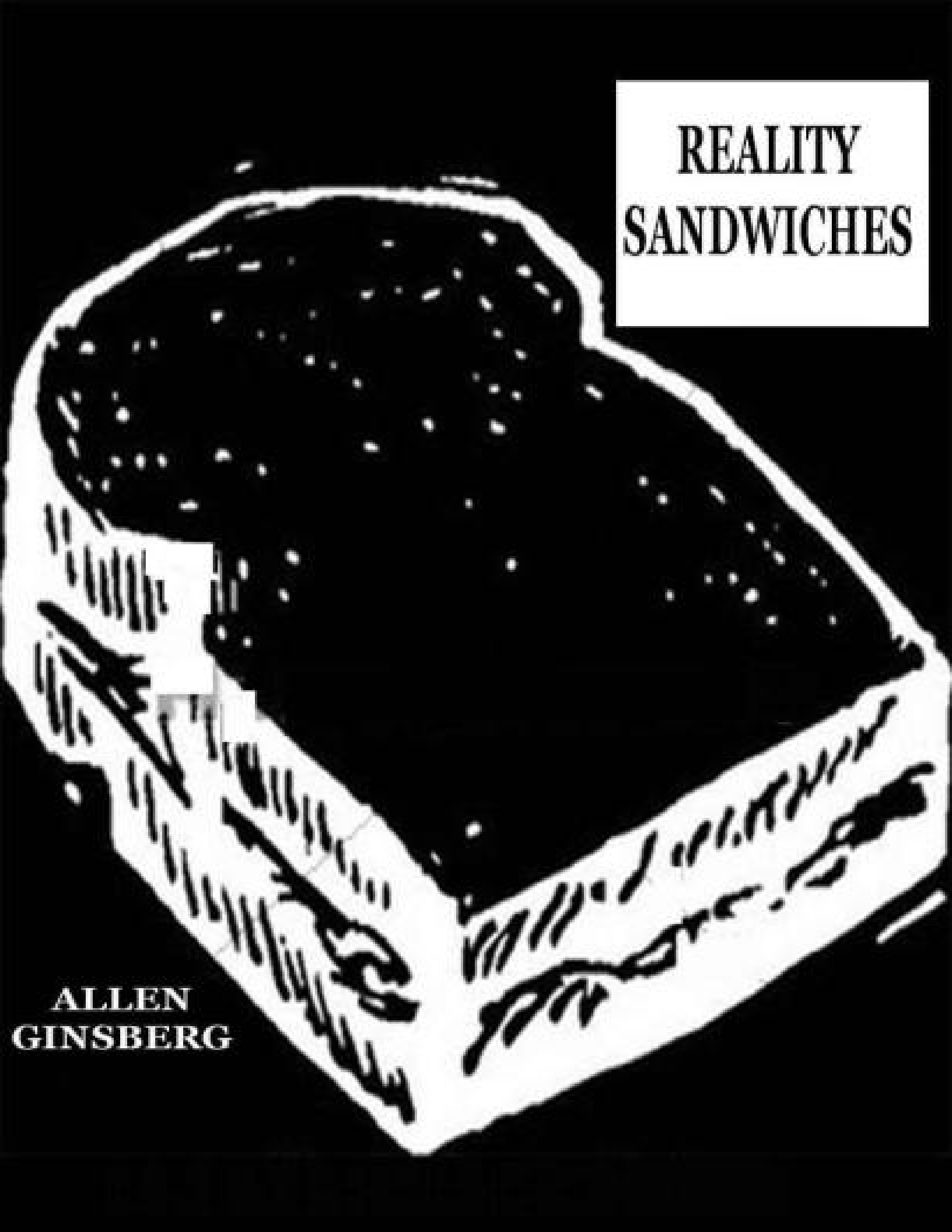
REALITY SANDWICHES



ALLEN GINSBERG

REALITY SANDWICHES 1953 - 60

ALLEN GINSBERG

'Scribbled secret notebooks, and wild typewritten pages, for yr own joy'

Dedicated to
the Pure Imaginary
POET Gregory Corso

Acknowledgement

Anyone who asked for writings I sent them -- the *Needle*, *Provincetown Review*, *Mattachine Review*, *Beatitude*, *Yugen*, *Evergreen Review*, *Swank*, *Partisan Review*, *White Dove*, *Chicago Review*, i.e. *Cambridge Review*, *New Directions 16*, *Grecourt Review*, *Combustion*, *Folio*, *Isis*, *Nomad*, *Venture*, *The Beat Scene*, *Rhinozerous*, *Hasty Papers*, & *Between Worlds*.

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MY ALBA

Now that I've wasted
five years in Manhattan
life decaying
talent a blank
talking disconnected
patient and mental
sliderule and number
machine on a desk
autographed triplicate
synopsis and taxes
obedient prompt
poorly paid
stayed on the market
youth of my twenties
fainted in offices
wept on typewriters
deceived multitudes
in vast conspiracies
deodorant battleships
serious business industry
every six weeks whoever
drank my blood bank
innocent evil now
part of my system
five years unhappy labor
22 to 27 working
not a dime in the bank
to show for it anyway
dawn breaks it's only the sun
the East smokes O my bedroom
I am damned to Hell what
alarmclock is ringing

NY 1953

SAKYAMUNI COMING OUT FROM THE MOUNTAIN
Liang Kai, Southern Sung

He drags his bare feet
out of a cave
under a tree,
eyebrows
grown long with weeping
and hooknosed woe,
in ragged soft robes
wearing a fine beard,
unhappy hands
clasped to his naked breast --
humility is beatness
humility is beatness --
faltering
into the bushes by a stream,
all things inanimate
but his intelligence --
stands upright there
tho trembling:
Arhat
who sought Heaven
under a mountain of stone,
sat thinking
till he realized
the land of blessedness exists
in the imagination --
the flash come:
empty mirror --
how painful to be born again
wearing a fine beard,
reentering the world
a bitter wreck of a sage:
earth before him his only path.

We can see his soul,
he knows nothing
like a god:
shaken
meek wretch --
humility is beatness
before the absolute World.
NY Public Library 1953

THE GREEN AUTOMOBILE

If I had a Green Automobile
I'd go find my old companion
in his house on the Western ocean.
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
I'd honk my horn at his manly gate,
inside his wife and three
children sprawl naked
on the living room floor.
He'd come running out
to my car full of heroic beer
and jump screaming at the wheel
for he is the greater driver.
We'd pilgrimage to the highest mount
of our earlier Rocky Mountain visions
laughing in each others arms,
delight surpassing the highest Rockies,
and after old agony, drunk with new years,
bounding toward the snowy horizon
blasting the dashboard with original bop
hot rod on the mountain
we'd batter up the cloudy highway
where angels of anxiety
careen through the trees
and scream out of the engine.
We'd burn all night on the jackpine peak
seen from Denver in the summer dark,
forestlike unnatural radiance
illuminating the mountaintop:
childhood youthtime age & eternity
would open like sweet trees
in the nights of another spring
and dumbfound us with love,

for we can see together
the beauty of souls
hidden like diamonds
in the clock of the world,
like Chinese magicians can
confound the immortals
with our intellectuality
hidden in the mist,
in the Green Automobile
which I have invented
imagined and visioned
on the roads of the world
more real than the engine
on a track in the desert
purer than Greyhound and
swifter than physical jetplane.
Denver! Denver! we'll return
roaring across the City & County Building lawn
which catches the pure emerald flame
streaming in the wake of our auto.
This time we'll buy up the city!
I cashed a great check in my skull bank
to found a miraculous college of the body
up on the bus terminal roof.
But first we'll drive the stations of downtown,
poolhall flophouse jazzjoint jail
whorehouse down Folsom
to the darkest alleys of Larimer
paying respects to Denver's father
lost on the railroad tracks,
stupor of wine and silence
hallowing the slum of his decades,
salute him and his saintly suitcase
of dark muscatel, drink
and smash the sweet bottles
on Diesels in allegiance.

Then we go driving drunk on boulevards
where armies march and still parade
staggering under the invisible
banner of Reality --
hurtling through the street
in the auto of our fate
we share an archangelic cigarette
and tell each others' fortunes:
fames of supernatural illumination,
bleak rainy gaps of time,
great art learned in desolation
and we beat apart after six decades. . . .
and on an asphalt crossroad,
deal with each other in princely
gentleness once more, recalling
famous dead talks of other cities.
The windshield's full of tears,
rain wets our naked breasts,
we kneel together in the shade
amid the traffic of night in paradise
and now renew the solitary vow
we made each other take
in Texas, once:
I can't inscribe here. . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
How many Saturday nights will be
made drunken by this legend?
How will young Denver come to mourn
her forgotten sexual angel?
How many boys will strike the black piano
in imitation of the excess of a native saint?
Or girls fall wanton under his spectre in the high
schools of melancholy night?
While all the time in Eternity
in the wan light of this poem's radio

we'll sit behind forgotten shades
hearkening the lost jazz of all Saturdays.
Neal, we'll be real heroes now
in a war between our cocks and time:
let's be the angels of the world's desire
and take the world to bed with us before
we die.
Sleeping alone, or with companion,
girl or fairy sheep or dream,
I'll fail of lacklove, you, satiety:
all men fall, our fathers fell before,
but resurrecting that lost flesh
is but a moment's work of mind:
an ageless monument to love
in the imagination:
memorial built out of our own bodies
consumed by the invisible poem --
We'll shudder in Denver and endure
though blood and wrinkles blind our eyes.
So this Green Automobile:
I give you in flight
a present, a present
from my imagination.
We will go riding
over the Rockies,
we'll go on riding
all night long until dawn,
then back to your railroad, the SP
your house and your children
and broken leg destiny
you'll ride down the plains
in the morning: and back
to my visions, my office
and eastern apartment
I'll return to New York.
NY 1953

HAVANA 1953

I

The night cafe -- 4AM
Cuba Libre 20c:
white tiled squares,
triangular neon lights,
long wooden bar on one side,
a great delicatessen booth
on the other facing the street.
In the center
among the great city midnight drinkers,
by Aedama Palace
on Gomez corner,
white men and women
with standing drums,
mariachis, voices, guitars --
drumming on tables,
knives on bottles,
banging on the floor
and on each other,
with wooden clacks,
whistling, howling,
fat women in strapless silk.
Cop talking to the fat nosed girl
in a flashy black dress.
In walks a weird Cezanne
vision of the nowhere hip Cuban:
tall, thin, check grey suit,
grey felt shoes,
blaring gambler's hat,
Cab Calloway pimp's mustachio

-- it comes down to a point in the center --
rushing up generations late talking Cuban,
pointing a gold ringed finger
up toward the yellowed ceiling,
other cigarette hand pointing
stiff-armed down at his side,
effeminate: -- he sees the cop --
they rush together -- they're embracing
like long lost brothers --
fatnose forgotten.
Delicate chords
from the negro guitarino
-- singers at El Rancho Grande,
drunken burlesque
screams of agony,
VIVA JALISCO!
I eat a catfish sandwich
with onions and red sauce
20c.

II

A truly romantic spot,
more guitars, Columbus Square
across from Columbus Cathedral
-- I'm in the Paris Restaurant
adjacent, best in town,
Cuba Libres 30c --
weatherbeaten tropical antiquity,
as if rock decayed,
unlike the pure
Chinese drummers of black stone
whose polished harmony can still be heard
(Procession of Musicians) at the Freer,
this with its blunt cornucopias and horns

of conquest made of stone --
a great dumb rotting church.
Night, lights from windows,
high stone balconies
on the antique square,
green rooms
paled by florescent houselighting,
a modern convenience.
I feel rotten.
I would sit down with my servants and be dumb.
I spent too much money.
White electricity
in the gaslamp fixtures of the alley.
Bullet holes and nails in the stone wall.
The worried headwaiter
standing amid the potted palms in cans
in the fifteen foot wooden door looking at me.
Mariachi harmonica artists inside
getting around to Banjo on My Knee yet.
They dress in wornout sharpie clothes.
Ancient streetlights down the narrow Calle I face,
the arch, the square,
palms, drunkenness, solitude;
voices across the street,
baby wail, girl's squeak,
waiters nudging each other,
grumble and cackle of young boys' laughter
in streetcorner waits,
perro barking off-stage,
baby strangling again,
banjo and harmonica,
auto rattle and a cool breeze --
Sudden paranoid notion the waiters are watching me:
Well they might,
four gathered in the doorway
and I alone at a table
on the patio in the dark

observing the square, drunk.
25c for them
and I asked for "Jalisco" --
at the end of the song
oxcart rolls by
obtruding its wheels
o'er the music o' the night.

SIESTA IN XBALBA and
RETURN TO THE STATES

dedicated to Karena Shields

I.

Late sun opening the book,
blank page like light,
invisible words unscrawled,
impossible syntax
of apocalypse --
Uxmal: Noble Ruins
No construction --
let the mind fall down.
-- One could pass valuable months
and years perhaps a lifetime
doing nothing but lying in a hammock
reading prose with the white doves
copulating underneath
and monkeys barking in the interior
of the mountain
and I have succumbed to this
temptation --
'They go mad in the Selva --'
the madman read
and laughed in his hammock
eyes watching me:
unease not of the jungle
the poor dear,
can tire one --
all that mud

and all those bugs . . .
ugh. . . .
Dreaming back I saw
an eternal kodachrome
souvenir of a gathering
of souls at a party,
crowded in an oval flash:
cigarettes, suggestions,
laughter in drunkenness,
broken sweet conversation,
acquaintance in the halls,
faces posed together,
stylized gestures,
odd familiar visages
and singular recognitions
that registered indifferent
greeting across time:
Anson reading Horace
with a rolling head,
white-handed Hohnsbean
camping gravely
with an absent glance,
bald Kingsland drinking
out of a huge glass,
Dusty in a party dress,
Durgin in white shoes
gesturing from a chair,
Keck in a corner waiting
for subterranean music,
Helen Parker lifting
her hands in surprise:
all posturing in one frame,
superficially gay
or tragic as may be,
illumed with the fatal
character and intelligent
actions of their lives.

And I in a concrete room
above the abandoned
labyrinth of Palenque
measuring my fate,
wandering solitary in the wild
-- blinking singleminded
at a bleak idea --
until exhausted with
its action and contemplation
my soul might shatter
at one primal moment's
sensation of the vast
movement of divinity.
As I leaned against a tree
inside the forest
expiring of self-begotten love,
I looked up at the stars absently,
as if looking for
something else in the blue night
through the boughs,
and for a moment saw myself
leaning against a tree . . .
. . . back there the noise of a great party
in the apartments of New York,
half-created paintings on the walls, fame,
cocksucking and tears,
money and arguments of great affairs,
the culture of my generation . . .
my own crude night imaginings,
my own crude soul notes taken down
in moments of isolation, dreams,
piercings, sequences of nocturnal thought
and primitive illuminations
-- uncanny feeling the white cat
sleeping on the table
will open its eyes in a moment
and be looking at me --.

One might sit in this Chiapas
recording the apparitions in the field
visible from a hammock
looking out across the shadow of the pasture
in all the semblance of Eternity
. . . a dwarfed thatch roof
down in the grass in a hollow slope
under the tall crowd of vegetation
waiting at the wild edge:
the long shade of the mountain beyond
in the near distance,
its individual hairline of trees
traced fine and dark along the ridge
against the transparent sky light,
rifts and holes in the blue air
and amber brightenings of clouds
disappearing down the other side
into the South . . .
palms with lethargic feelers
rattling in presage of rain,
shifting their fronds
in the direction of the balmy wind,
monstrous animals
sprayed up out of the ground
settling and unsettling
as in water . . .
and later in the night
a moment of premonition
when the plenilunar cloudfilled sky
is still and small.
So spent a night
with drug and hammock
at Chichen Itza on the Castle:--
I can see the moon
moving over the edge of the night forest
and follow its destination
through the clear dimensions of the sky

from end to end of the dark
circular horizon.
High dim stone portals,
entablatures of illegible scripture,
bas-reliefs of unknown perceptions:
and now the flicker of my lamp
and smell of kerosene on dust-
strewn floor where ant wends
its nightly ritual way toward great faces
worn down by rain.
In front of me a deathshead
half a thousand years old
-- and have seen cocks a thousand
old grown over with moss and batshit
stuck out of the wall
in a dripping vaulted house of rock --
but deathshead's here
on portal still and thinks its way
through centuries the thought
of the same night in which I sit
in skully meditation
-- sat in many times before by
artisan other than me
until his image of ghostly change
appeared unalterable --
but now his fine thought's vaguer
than my dream of him:
and only the crude skull figurement's
gaunt insensible glare is left,
with its broken plumes of sensation
and indecipherable headdresses of intellect
scattered in the madness of oblivion
to holes and notes of elemental stone,
blind face of animal transcendency
over the holy ruin of the world
dissolving into the sunless wall of a blackened room
on a time-rude pyramid rebuilt

in the bleak flat night of Yucatan
where I come with my own mad mind to study
alien hieroglyphs of Eternity.
A creak in the rooms scared me.
Some sort of bird, vampire or swallow,
flees with little paper wingflap
around the summit in its own air unconcerned
with the great stone tree I perch on.
Continual metallic
whirr of chicharras,
then lesser chirps
of cricket: 5 blasts
of the leg whistle.
The creak of an opening
door in the forest,
some sort of weird birdsong
or reptile croak.
My hat woven of hennequin
on the stone floor
as a leaf on the waters,
as perishable;
my candle wavers continuously
and will go out.
Pale Uxmal,
unhistoric, like a dream,
Tuluum shimmering on the coast in ruins;
Chichen Itza naked
constructed on a plain;
Palenque, broken chapels in the green
basement of a mount;
lone Kabah by the highway;
Piedras Negras buried again
by dark archaeologists;
Yaxchilan
resurrected in the wild,
and all the limbo of Xbalba still unknown --

floors under roofcomb of branch,
foundation to ornament
tumbled to the flowers,
pyramids and stairways
raced with vine,
limestone corbels
down in the river of trees,
pillars and corridors
sunken under the flood of years:
Time's slow wall overtopping
all that firmament of mind,
as if a shining waterfall of leaves and rain
were built down solid from the endless sky
through which no thought can pass.
A great red fat rooster
mounted on a tree stump
in the green afternoon,
the ego of the very fields,
screams in the holy sunlight!
-- I can't think with that
supersonic cock intensity
crucifying my skull
in its imaginery sleep.
-- was looking back
with eyes shut to
where they crawled
like ants on brown old temples
building their minute ruins
and disappearing into the wild
leaving many mysteries
of deathly volition
to be divined.
I alone know the great crystal door
to the House of Night,
a legend of centuries
-- I and a few indians.

And had I mules and money I could find
the Cave of Amber
and the Cave of Gold
rumored of the cliffs of Tumbala.
I found the face of one
of the Nine Guardians of the Night
hidden in a mahogany hut
in the Area of Lost Souls
-- first relic of kind for that place.
And I found as well a green leaf
shaped like a human heart;
but to whom shall I send this
anachronistic valentine?
Yet these ruins so much
woke me to nostalgia
for the classic stations
of the earth,
the ancient continent
I have not seen
and the few years
of memory left
before the ultimate night
of war.
As if these ruins were not enough,
as if man could go
no further before heaven
till he exhausted
the physical round
of his own mortality
in the obscure cities
hidden in the ageing world
. . . the few actual
ecstatic conscious souls
certain to be found,
familiars . . .
returning after years
to my own scene

transfigured:
to hurry change
to hurry the years
bring me to my fate.
So I dream nightly of an embarcation,
captains, captains,
iron passageways, cabin lights,
Brooklyn across the waters,
the great dull boat, visitors, farewells,
the blurred vast sea --
one trip a lifetime's loss or gain:
as Europe is my own imagination
-- many shall see her,
many shall not --
though it's only the old familiar world
and not some abstract mystical dream.
And in a moment of previsioning sleep
I see that continent in rain,
black streets, old night, a
fading monument . . .
And a long journey unaccomplished
yet, on antique was
rolling in gray barren dunes under
the world's waste of light
toward ports of childish geography
the rusty ship will
harbor in . . .
What nights might I not see
penniless among the Arab
mysteries of dirty towns around
the casbahs of the docks?
Clay paths, mud walls,
the smell of green cigarettes,
creosote and rank salt water --
dark structures overhead,
shapes of machinery and façade
of hull: and a bar lamp

burning in the wooden shack
across from the dim
mountain of sulphur on the pier.
Toward what city
will I travel? What wild houses
do I go to occupy?
What vagrant rooms and streets
and lights in the long night
urge my expectation? What genius
of sensation in ancient
halls? what jazz beyond jazz
in future blue saloons?
what love in the cafes of God?
I thought, five years ago
sitting in my apartment,
my eyes were opened for an hour
seeing in dreadful ecstasy
the motionless buildings
of New York rotting
under the tides of Heaven.
There is a god
dying in America
already created
in the imagination of men
made palpable
for adoration:
there is an inner
anterior image
of divinity
beckoning me out
to pilgrimage.
O future, unimaginable God.
Finca Tacalapan de San
Leandro, Palenque,
Chiapas, Mexico 1954 --
San Francisco1955

II.

Jump in time
to the immediate future,
another poem:
return to the old land
penniless and with
a disconnected manuscript,
the recollection of a few
sensations, beginning:
logboat down Rio Michol
under plantain
and drifting trees
to the railroad,
darkness on the sea
looking toward the stations
of the classic world --
another image descending
in white mist
down the lunar highway
at dawn, above
Lake Catemaco on the bus
-- it woke me up --
the far away likeness
of a heavenly file
of female saints
stepping upward
on miniature arches
of a gold stairway
into the starry sky,
the thousands of little
saintesses in blue hoods
looking out at me
and beckoning:
SALVATION!

It's true,
simple as in the image.
Then the mummies
in their Pantheon
at Guanajuato --
a city of Cortesian
mines in the first
crevasse of the Sierras,
where I rested --
for I longed to see their
faces before I left:
these weren't mythical rock
images, tho stone
-- limestone effigies out
of the grave, remains
of the fatal character --
newly resurrected,
grasping their bodies
with stiff arms, in soiled
funeral clothes;
twisted, knock-kneed,
like burning
screaming lawyers --
what hallucinations
of the nerves? --
indecipherable-sexed;
one death-man had
raised up his arms
to cover his eyes,
significant timeless
reflex in sepulchre:
apparitions of immortality
consumed inward,
waiting openmouthed
in the fireless darkness.
Nearby, stacked symmetrically,
a skullbone wall ending

the whitewashed corridor
under the graveyard
-- foetid smell reminiscent
of sperm and drunkenness --
the skulls empty and fragile,
numerous as shells,
-- so much life passed through
this town . . .
The problem is isolation
-- there in the grave
or here in oblivion of light.
Of eternity we have
a numbered score of years
and fewer tender moments
-- one moment of tenderness
and a year of intelligence
and nerves: one moment of pure
bodily tenderness --
I could dismiss Allen with grim
pleasure.
Reminder: I knelt in my room
on the patio at San Miguel
at the keyhole: 2 A.M.
The old woman lit a candle.
Two young men and their girls
waited before the portal,
news from the street. She
changed the linen, smiling.
What joy! The nakedness!
They dance! They talk
and simper before the door,
they lean on a leg,
hand on a hip, and posture,
nudity in their hearts,
they clap a hand to head
and whirl and enter,
pushing each other,

happily, happily,
to a moment of love. . .
What solitude I've
finally inherited.
Afterward fifteen hours
on rubbled single lane,
broken bus rocking along
the maws and continental crags
of mountain afternoon,
the distant valleys fading,
regnant peaks beyond
to days on the Pacific
where I bathed --
then riding, fitful,
gazing, sleeping
through the desert
beside a wetback
sad-faced old-man-
youth, exhausted
to Mexicali
to stand
near one night's dark shack
on the garbage cliffs
of bordertown overhanging
the tin house poor
man's village below,
a last night's
timewracked brooding
and farewell,
the end of a trip.
-- Returning
armed with New Testament,
critic of horse and mule,
tanned and bearded
satisfying Whitman, concerned
with a few Traditions,
metrical, mystical, manly

. . . and certain characteristic flaws
-- enough!
The nation over the border
grinds its arms and dreams
of war: I see
the fiery blue clash
of metal wheels
clanking in the industries
of night, and
detonation of infernal bombs
. . . and the silent downtown
of the States
in watery dusk submersion.
Guanajuato -- Los Angeles, 1954
[NOTE: Uxmal and other proper names mentioned in the first part of the poem are those of ruined cities. Xbalba, translatable as morning Star in Region Obscure, or Hope, and pronounced Chivalvá, is the area in Chiapas between the Tobasco border and the Usumascintla River at the edge of the Peten Rain Forest; the boundary of lower Mexico and Guatemala today is thereabouts. The locale was considered a Purgatory or Limbo, the legend is vague, in the (Old) Mayan Empire. To the large tree at the crest of what is now called Mount Don Juan, at the foot of which this poem was written, ancient craftsmen came to complete work left unfinished at their death.]

ON BURROUGHS' WORK

The method must be purest meat
and no symbolic dressing,
actual visions & actual prisons
as seen then and now.
Prisons and visions presented
with rare descriptions
corresponding exactly to those
of Alcatraz and Rose.
A naked lunch is natural to us,
we eat reality sandwiches.
But allegories are so much lettuce.
Don't hide the madness.
San Jose 1954

LOVE POEM ON THEME BY WHITMAN

I'll go into the bedroom silently and lie down between the bridegroom and the bride,
those bodies fallen from heaven stretched out waiting naked and restless,
arms resting over their eyes in the darkness,
bury my face in their shoulders and breasts, breathing their skin,
and stroke and kiss neck and mouth and make back be open and known,
legs raised up crook'd to receive, cock in the darkness driven tormented and attacking
roused up from hole to itching head,
bodies locked shuddering naked, hot lips and buttocks screwed into each other
and eyes, eyes glinting and charming, widening into looks and abandon,
and moans of movement, voices, hands in air, hands between thighs,
hands in moisture on softened lips, throbbing contraction of bellies
till the white come flow in the swirling sheets,
and the bride cry for forgiveness, and the groom be covered with tears of passion and compassion,
and I rise up from the bed replenished with last intimate gestures and kisses of farewell --
all before the mind wakes, behind shades and closed doors in a darkened house
where the inhabitants roam unsatisfied in the night,
nude ghosts seeking each other out in the silence.

OVER KANSAS

Starting with eyeball kicks
on storefronts from bus window
on way to Oakland airport:
I am no ego
these are themselves
stained grey wood and gilded
nigger glass and barberpole
thass all.
But then, Kiss Me Again
in the dim brick lounge,
muted modern music.
Where shall I fly
not to be sad, my dear?
The other businessmen
bend heavily over armchairs
introducing women to cocktails
in fluorescent shadow --
gaiety of tables,
gaiety of fat necks,
gaiety of departures,
gaiety of national business,
hands waving away jokes.
I'm getting maudlin
on the soft rug watching,
mixed rye before me
on the little black table
whereon lieth my briefcase
containing market research
notes and blank paper --
that airplane ride to come
-- or a barefaced pilgrimage
acrost imaginary plains
I never made afoot

into Kansas hallucination
and supernatural deliverance.
Later: Hawthorne mystic
waiting on the bench
composing his sermon also
with white bony fingers
bitten, with hometown gold
ring, in a blue serge suit
and barely visible blond
mustache on mental face,
blank-eyed: pitiful thin body
-- what body may he love? --
My god! the soft beauty in
comparison -- that football boy
in sunny yellow lovesuit
puzzling out his Xmas trip
death insurance by machine.
A virginal feeling again,
I'd be willing to die aloft now.
Can't see outside in the dark,
real dreary strangers about,
and I'm unhappy flying away.
All this facility of travel
too superficial for the heart
I have for solitude.
Nakedness
must come again -- not sex,
but some naked isolation.
And down there's Hollywood,
the starry world below
-- expressing nakedness --
that craving, that glory
that applause -- leisure, mind,
appetite for dreams, bodies,
travels: appetite for the real,
created by the mind
and kissed in coitus --

that craving, that melting!
Not even the human
imagination satisfies
the endless emptiness of the soul.
The West Coast behind me
for five days while I return
to ancient New York --
ah drunkenness!
I'll see your eyes again.
Hopeless comedown!
Travelling thru the dark void
over Kansas yet moving nowhere
in the dark void of the soul.
Angel woke me to see
-- past my own reflection,
bald businessman with hornrims
sleepy in round window view --
spectral skeleton of electricity
illuminated nervous system
floating on the void out
of central brainplant powerhouse
running into heaven's starlight
overhead. 'Twas over Hutchinson.
Engine passed over lights,
view gone.
Georgeous George on my plane.
And Chicago, the first time,
smoking winter city
-- shivering in my tweed jacket
walking by the airport
around the block on Cicero
under the fogged flat
supersky of heaven --
another project for the heart,
six months for here someday
to make Chicago natural,
pick up a few strange images.

Far off red signs
on the orphan highway
glimmer at the trucks of home.
Who rides that lone road now?
What heart? Who smokes and loves
in Kansas auto now?
Who's talking magic
under the night? Who walks
downtown and drinks black beer
in his eternity? Whose eyes
Collect the streets and mountain tops
for storage in his memory?
What sage in the darkness?
Someone who should collect
my insurance!
Better I make
a thornful pilgrimage on theory
feet to suffer the total
isolation of the bum,
than this hipster
business family journey
-- crossing U.S. at night --
in a sudden glimpse
me being no one in the air
nothing but clouds in the moonlight
with humans fucking
underneath. . . .

SF-NY December 1954

MALEST CORNIFICI TUO CATULLO

I'm happy, Kerouac, your madman Allen's
finally made it: discovered a new young cat,
and my imagination of an eternal boy
walks on the streets of San Francisco,
handsome, and meets me in cafeterias
and loves me. Ah don't think I'm sickening.
You're angry at me. For all of my lovers?
It's hard to eat shit, without having visions;
when they have eyes for me it's like Heaven.

SF 1955

DREAM RECORD: JUNE 8, 1955

A drunken night in my house with a
boy, San Francisco: I lay asleep:
darkness:
I went back to Mexico City
and saw Joan Burroughs leaning
forward in a garden-chair, arms
on her knees. She studied me with
clear eyes and downcast smile, her
face restored to a fine beauty
tequila and salt had made strange
before the bullet in her brow.
We talked of the life since then.
Well, what's Burroughs doing now?
Bill on earth, he's in North Africa.
Oh, and Kerouac? Jack still jumps
with the same beat genius as before,
notebooks filled with Buddha.
I hope he makes it, she laughed.
Is Huncke still in the can? No,
last time I saw him on Times Square.
And how is Kenney? Married, drunk
and golden in the East. You? New
loves in the West --
Then I knew
she was a dream: and questioned her
-- Joan, what kind of knowledge have
the dead? can you still love
your mortal acquaintances?
What do you remember of us?
She
faded in front of me -- The next instant
I saw her rain-stained tombstone
rear an illegible epitaph

under the gnarled branch of a small
tree in the wild grass
of an unvisited garden in Mexico.

Blessed be the Muses
for their descent,
dancing round my desk,
crowning my balding head
with Laurel.

FRAGMENT 1956

Now to the come of the poem, let me be worthy
& sing holily the natural pathos of the human soul,
naked original skin beneath our dreams
& robes of thought, the perfect self identity
radiant with lusts and intellectual faces
Who carries the lines, the painful browed
contortions of the upper eyes, the whole body
breathing and sentient among flowers and buildings
open-eyed, self knowing, trembling with love --
Soul that I have, that Jack has, Huncke has
Bill has, Joan had, and has in me memory yet,
bum has in rags, madman underneath black clothes.
Soul identical each to each, as standing on
the streetcorner ten years ago I looked at Jack
and told him we were the same person -- look
in my eyes and speak to yourself, that makes me
everybody's lover, Hal mine against his will,
I had his soul in my own body already, while
he frowned -- by the streetlamp 8th Avenue & 27th
Street 1947 -- I had just come back from Africa
with a gleam of the illumination actually
to come to me in time as come to all -- Jack
the worst murderer, Allen the most cowardly
with a streak of yellow love running through
my poems, a fag in the city, Joe Army screaming
in anguish in Dannemora 1945 jailhouse,
breaking his own white knuckle against the bars
his dumb sad cellmate beaten by the guards
an iron floor below, Gregory weeping in Tombs,
Joan lidded under eyes of benzedrine
harkening to the paranoia in the wall,
Huncke from Chicago dreaming in Arcades
of hellish Pokerino blue skinned Times Square light,

Bill King yelling pale faced in the subway window
final minute gape-death struggling to return,
Morphy himself, arch suicide, expiring in blood
on the Passaic, tragic & bewildered in
last tears, attaining death that moment
human, intellectual, bearded, who else
was he then but himself?

A STRANGE NEW COTTAGE IN BERKELEY

All afternoon cutting bramble blackberries off a tottering brown fence
under a low branch with its rotten old apricots miscellaneous under the leaves,
fixing the drip in the intricate gut machinery of a new toilet; found a good coffeepot in the vines by the porch, rolled a big tire out of the scarlet bushes, hid my marijuana;
wet the flowers, playing the sunlit water each to each, returning for godly extra drops for the stringbeans and daisies;
three times walked round the grass and sighed absently: my reward, when the garden fed me its plums from the form of a small tree in the corner,
an angel thoughtful of my stomach, and my dry and lovelorn tongue.

1956

SATHER GATE ILLUMINATION

Why do I deny manna to another?
Because I deny it to myself.
Why have I denied myself?
What other has rejected me?
Now I believe you are lovely, my soul, soul of Allen, Allen --
and you so beloved, so sweetened, so recalled to your true loveliness,
your original nude breathing Allen
will you ever deny another again?
Dear Walter, thanks for the message
I forbid you not to touch me, man to man, True American.
The bombers jet through the sky in unison of twelve
the pilots are sweating and nervous at the controls in the hot cabins.
Over what souls will they loose their loveless bombs?
The Campanile pokes its white granite (?) innocent head into the clouds for me to look at.
A cripple lady explains French grammar with a loud sweet voice:
Regarder is to look --
the whole French language looks on the trees on the campus.
The girls' haunted voices make quiet dates for 2 O'clock
-- yet one of them waves farewell and smiles at last -- her red
skirt swinging shows how she loves herself.
Another encased in flashy scotch clothes clomps up the
concrete in a hurry -- into the door -- poor dear! -- who will
receive you in love's offices?
How many beautiful boys have I seen on this spot?
The trees seem on the verge of moving -- ah! they do move
in the breeze.
Roar again of airplanes in the sky -- everyone looks up.
And do you know that all these rubbings of the eyes & painful
gestures to the brow
of suited scholars entering Dwinelle (Hall) are Holy Signs? --
anxiety and fear?

How many years have I got to float on this sweetened scene
of trees & humans clomping above ground --
O I must be mad to sit here lonely in the void & glee & build
up thoughts of love!
But what do I have to doubt but my own shiney eyes, what
to lose but life which is a vision today this afternoon.
My stomach is light, I relax, new sentences spring forth out
of the scene to describe spontaneous forms of Time --
trees, sleeping dogs, airplanes wandering thru the air,
negroes with their lunch books of anxiety, apples and
sandwiches, lunchtime, icecream, Timeless --
And even the ugliest will seek beauty -- 'What are you doing
Friday night?'
asks the sailor in white school training cap &
gilt buttons & blue coat,
and the little ape in a green jacket and baggy pants and
overloaded schoolbook satchel says 'Quartets.'
Every Friday nite, beautiful quartets to celebrate and please my soul with all its hair -- Music!
and then strides off, snapping pieces chocolate off a bar wrapped in Hershey brown paper and tinfoil, eating chocolate rose.
& how can those other boys be them happy selves in their brown army study uniforms?
Now cripple girl swings down walk with loping fuck gestures of her hips askew --
let her roll her eyes in abandon & camp angelic through the campus bouncing her body about in joy --
someone will dig that pelvic energy for sure.
Those white stripes down your chocolate cupcake, Lady (held in front of your nose finishing sentence preparatory to chomp),
they were painted there to delight you by some spanish industrial artistic hand in bakery factory faraway,
expert hand in simple-minded messages of white stripes on millions of message cupcakes.
I have a message for you all -- I will denote one particularity of each!
And there goes Professor Hart striding enlightened by the years through the doorway and arcade he built (in his mind) and knows -- he too saw the ruins

of Yucatan once --
followed by a lonely janitor in dovegrey italian fruitpeddlar Chico Marx hat pushing his rollypoly belly thru the trees.
N sees all girls
as visions of
their inner cunts,
yes, it's true!
and all men walking
along thinking
of their spirit cocks.
So look at that poor dread boy
with two-day black hair
all over his dirty face,
how he must hate his cock
-- Chinamen stop shuddering
and now to bring this to an end with a rise and an ellipse --
The boys are now all talking to the girls 'If I was a girl I'd love all boys' & girls giggling the opposite, all pretty everywhichway
and even I have my secret beds and lovers under another moonlight, be you sure
& any minute I expect to see a baby carriage pushed on to the scene
and everyone turn in attention like the airplanes and laughter, like a Greek Campus
and the big brown shaggy silent dog lazing openeyed in the shade lift up his head & sniff & lower his head on his golden paws & let his belly rumble away unconcerned.
. . . the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold.
Now the silence is broken, students pour onto the square, the doors are crowded, the dog gets up and walks away,
the cripple swings out of Dwinelle, a nun even, I wonder about her, an old lady distinguished by a cane,
we all look up, silence moves, huge changes upon the ground, and in the air thoughts fly all over filling space.
My grief at Peter's not loving me was grief at not loving myself.
Huge Karmas of broken minds in beautiful bodies unable to receive love

because not knowing the self as lovely --
Fathers and Teachers!
Seeing in people the visible evidence of inner self thought by their treatment of me: who loves himself loves me who love myself.

1956

SCRIBBLE
Rexroth's face reflecting human tired bliss
White haired, wing browed gas mustache,
flowers jet out of
his sad head,
listening to Edith Piaf street song as she walks the universe
with all life gone
and cities disappeared
only the God of Love
left smiling.

AFTERNOON SEATTLE

Busride along waterfront down Yessler under street bridge to the old red Wobbly Hall --
One Big Union, posters of the Great Mandala of Labor, bleareyed dusty cardplayers dreaming behind the counter . . . 'but these young fellers can't see ahead and we nothing to offer' --
After Snyder his little red beard and bristling Buddha mind I weeping crossed Skid Road to 10c. beer.
Labyrinth wood stairways and Greek movies under Farmers Market second hand city, Indian smoked salmon old overcoats and dry red shoes,
Green Parrot Theater, *Maytime*, and down to the harborside the ships, walked on Alaska silent together -- ferryboat coming faraway in mist from Bremerton Island dreamlike small on the waters of Holland to me
-- and entered my head the seagull, a shriek, sentinels standing over rusty harbor iron clockwork, rocks dripping under rotten wharves slime on the walls --
the seagull's small cry -- inhuman not of the city, lone sentinels of God, animal birds among us indifferent, their bleak lone cries representing our souls.
A rowboat docked and chained floating in the tide by a wharf. Basho's frog. Someone left it there, it drifts.
Sailor's curio shop hung with shells and skulls a whalebone mask, Indian seas. The cities rot from oldest parts. Little red mummy from Idaho Frank H. Little your big hat high cheekbones crosseyes and song.
The cities rot from the center, the suburbs fall apart a slow apocalypse of rot the spectral trolleys fade
the cities rot the fire escapes hang and rust the brick turns
black dust falls uncollected garbage heaps the wall
the birds invade with their cries the skid row alley creeps
downtown the ancient jailhouse groans bums snore under the
pavement a dark Turkish bath the cornice gapes at midnight
Seattle! -- department stores full of fur coats and camping
equipment, mad noontime businessmen in gabardine coats talk-
ing on streetcorners to keep up the structure, I float past, birds

cry,
Salvation Army offers soup on rotting block, six thousand
beggars groan at a meal of hopeful beans.

1956

PSALM III

To God: to illuminate all men. Beginning with Skid Road.
Let Occidental and Washington be transformed into a higher place, the plaza of eternity.
Illuminate the welders in shipyards with the brilliance of their torches.
Let the crane operator lift up his arm for joy.
Let elevators creak and speak, ascending and descending in awe.
Let the mercy of the flower's direction beckon in the eye.
Let the straight flower bespeak its purpose in straightness -- to seek the light.
Let the crooked flower bespeak its purpose in crookedness -- to seek the light.
Let the crookedness and straightness bespeak the light.
Let Puget Sound be a blast of light.
I feed on your Name like a cockroach on a crumb -- this cockroach is holy.

Seattle 1956

TEARS

I'm crying all the time now.
I cried all over the street when I left the Seattle Wobbly Hall.
I cried listening to Bach.
I cried looking at the happy flowers in my backyard, I cried at the sadness of the middle-aged trees.
Happiness exists I feel it.
I cried for my soul, I cried for the world's soul.
The world has a beautiful soul.
God appearing to be seen and cried over. Overflowing heart of Paterson.

Arctic, 1956

READY TO ROLL

To Mexico! To Mexico! Down the dovegrey highway, past
Atomic City police, past the firey border to dream
cantinas!
Standing on the sunny metropolitan plateau, stranger prince
on the street, dollars in my pocket, alone, free --
genitals and thighs and buttocks under skin and
leather.
Music! Taxis! Marijuana in the slums! Ancient sexy parks!
Continental boulevards in America! Modern downtown
for a dollar! *Dungarees in Les Ambassadeurs*! And
here's a hard brown cock for a quarter!
Drunkenness! and the long night walks down brown streets,
eyes, windows, buses, interior charnels behind the
Cathedral, lost squares and hungry tacos, a calf's head
cooked and picked apart for meat,
and the blackened inner roofs and tents of the Thieves'
Market, street crisscrossed on street, a naked hipster
labyrinth, stealing, pausing, loitering, noticing drums,
purchasing nothing
but a broken aluminum coffee pot with a doll's arm sticking
up out of the mouth.
Haha! what do I want? Change of solitude, spectre of
drunkenness in paranoiac taxicabs, fear and gaiety of
unknown lovers
coming around the empty streetcorner dark-eyed and watching
me make it there alone under the new hip moon.

S.F. 1956

WROTE THIS LAST NIGHT

Listen to the tale of the sensitive car
who was coughed up out of earth in Pittsburgh.
She screamed like a Swedish Prime Minister
on her first flight down the red neon highway,
she couldn't stand the sirens and blind lights
of the male cars Fords Oldsmobiles Studebakers
-- her assembly line foreman had prophecied wild wreck
on Sunset Boulevard headlights & eyeballs broken fenders & bones.
She rode all over Mexico avoiding Los Angeles
praying to be an old junkie in a bordertown graveyard
with rattley doors and yellow broken windowpanes
bent license plate weak brakes & unsaleable motor
worn out by the slow buttocks of teen-age nightmare
panting under the impoverished jissom of the August moon,
Anything but that final joyride with the mad producer
and his bombshell intellectual star on the last night up from Mexicali.

SQUEAL

He rises he stretches he liquefies he is hammered again
He's divided in shares he litters the floor of the Bourse
He's cut by adamantine snips and sent by railway car
Accumulated on the margin by bony Goldfinger has various
Visions of being an automobile consolidates
The fortune of spectral lawyers heirs weep over him
He melts he undergoes remarkable metamorphoses peculiar
Hallucinations he coughs up debentures beaten
By immense hammers in a vast loft pours in fire spurts
Upward in molten forges he levels he dreams and he cools
And the present adjusted steel squints.
A hunchback tuberculosis salesman drives him cackling to St Louis
In the rain Hack no will of his own Creep next resale Crank
San Pedro tomorrow St Joe Squeak will it never end Hohokus --
Crashes into a dirty locomotive the bastard never
Mind stock averages decline slightly here's the mechanic
Blam the junkyard Help the smelter later a merger pressure accumulates
He's had it now Eek he's an airplane Whine he wants to go home
Suddenly he dives on the market like a bomb.

1958

AMERICAN CHANGE

The first I looked on, after a long time far from home in
mid Atlantic on a summer day
Dolphins breaking the glassy water under the blue sky,
a gleam of silver in my cabin, fished up out of my jangling
new pocket of coins and green dollars
-- held in my palm, the head of the feathered indian, old
Buck-Rogers eagle eyed face, a gash of hunger in the cheek
gritted jaw of the vanished man begone like a Hebrew
with hairlock combed down the side -- O Rabbi Indian
what visionary gleam 100 years ago on Buffalo prairie
under the molten cloud shot sky, 'the same clear light 10000
miles in all directions'
but now with all the violin music of Vienna, gone into
the great slot machine of Kansas City, Reno --
The coin seemed so small after vast European coppers
thick francs leaden pesetas, lira endless and heavy,
a miniature primeval memorialized in 5c. nickle candy-
store nostalgia of the redskin, dead on silver coin,
with shaggy buffalo on reverse, hump-backed little tail
incurved, head butting against the rondure of Eternity,
cock forelock below, bearded shoulder muscle folded
below muscle, head of prophet, bowed,
vanishing beast of Time, hoar body rubbed clean of
wrinkles and shining like polished stone, bright metal in my
forefinger, ridiculous buffalo -- to New York.
Dime next I found, Minerva, sexless cold & chill, ascend-
ing goddess of money -- and was it the wife of Wallace Stevens,
truly?
and now from the locks flowing the miniature wings of
speedy thought,
executive dyke, Minerva, goddess of Madison Avenue,
forgotten useless dime that can't buy hot dog, dead dime --

Then we've George Washington, less primitive, the snub-
nosed quarter, smug eyes and mouth, some idiot's design of the
sexless Father,
naked down to his neck, a ribbon in his wig, high fore-
head, Roman line down the nose, fat checked, still showing his
falsetooth ideas -- O Eisenhower & Washington -- O Fathers --
No movie star dark beauty -- O thou Bignoses --
Quarter, remembered quarter, 40c. in all -- What'll you
buy me when I land -- one icecream soda? --
poor pile of coins, original reminders of the sadness,
forgotten money of America --
nostalgia of the first touch of those coins, American
change,
the memory in my aging hand, the same old silver reflec-
tive there,
the thin dime hidden between my thumb and forefinger
All the struggles for those coins, the sadness of their re-
appearance
my reappearance on those fabled shores
and the failure of that Dream, that Vision of Money
reduced to this haunting recollection
of the gas lot in Paterson where I found half a dollar
gleaming in the grass --
I have a $5 bill in my pocket -- it's Lincoln's sour black
head moled wrinkled, forelocked too, big eared, flags of announce-
ment flying over the bill, stamps in green and spiderweb black,
long numbers in racetrack green, immense promise, a
girl, a hotel, a busride to Albany, a night of brilliant drunk in
some faraway corner of Manhattan
a stick of several teas, or paper or cap of Heroin, or a $5
strange present to the blind.
Money money, reminder, I might as well write poems to
you -- dear American money -- O statue of Liberty I ride en-
folded in money in my mind to you -- and last
Ahhh! Washington again, on the Dollar, same poetic
black print, dark words, The United States of America, innumer-
able numbers

R956422481 One Dollar This Certificate is Legal Tender
(tender!) for all debts public and private
My God My God why have you foresaken me
Ivy Baker Priest Series 1935 F
and over, the Eagle, wild wings outspread, halo of the
Stars encircled by puffs of smoke & flame --
a circle the Masonic Pyramid, the sacred Swedenborgian
Dollar America, bricked up to the top, & floating surreal above
the triangle of holy outstaring Eye sectioned out of the
aire, shining
light emitted from the eyebrowless triangle -- and a desert
of cactus, scattered all around, clouds afar,
this being the Great Seal of our Passion, *Annuit Coeptes*,
Novis Ordo Seculorum,
the whole surrounded by green spiderwebs designed by
T-Men to prevent foul counterfeit --
ONE

S.S United States, 1958

'BACK ON TIMES SQUARE, DREAMING OF TIMES SQUARE'

Let some sad trumpeter stand
on the empty streets at dawn
and blow a silver chorus to the
buildings of Times Square,
memorial of ten years, at 5 AM, with
the thin white moon just
visible
above the green & grooking McGraw
Hill offices
a cop walks by, but he's invisible
with his music
The Globe Hotel, Garver lay in
grey beds there and hunched his
back and cleaned his needles --
where I lay many nights on the nod
from his leftover bloody cottons
and dreamed of Blake's voice talking --
I was lonely,
Garver's dead in Mexico two years,
hotel's vanished into a parking lot
And I'm back here -- sitting on the streets
again --
The movies took our language, the
great red signs
A DOUBLE BILL OF GASSERS
Teen Age Nightmare
Hooligans of the Moon
But we were never nightmare
hooligans but seekers of
the blond nose for Truth
Some old men are still alive, but
the old Junkies are gone --

We are a legend, invisible but
legendary, as prophecied

NY 1958

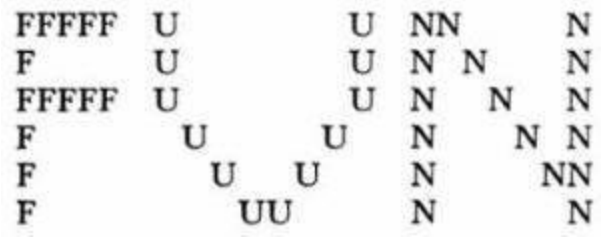
MY SAD SELF

To Frank O'Hara

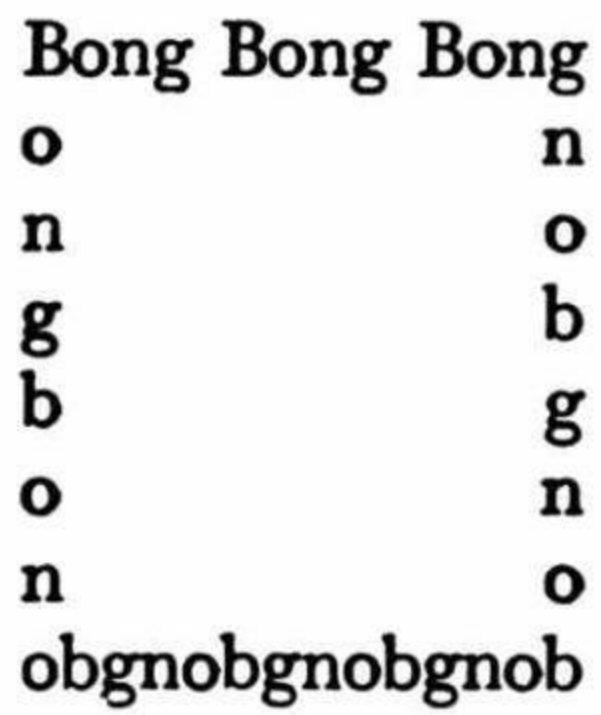
Sometimes when my eyes are red
I go up on top of the RCA Building
and gaze at my world, Manhattan --
my buildings, streets I've done feats in,
lofts, beds, coldwater flats
-- on Fifth Ave below which I also bear in mind,
its ant cars, little yellow taxis, men
walking the size of specks of wool --
Panorama of the bridges, sunrise over Brooklyn machine,
sun go down over New Jersey where I was born
& Paterson where I played with ants --
my later loves on 15th Street,
my greater loves of Lower East Side,
my once fabulous amours in the Bronx
faraway --
paths crossing in these hidden streets,
my history summed up, my absences
and ecstasies in Harlem --
-- sun shining down on all I own
in one eyeblink to the horizon
in my last eternity --
matter is water.
Sad,
I take the elevator and go
down, pondering,
and walk on the pavements staring into all man's
plateglass, faces,
questioning after who loves,
and stop, bemused
in front of an automobile shopwindow

standing lost in calm thought,
traffic moving up & down 5th Avenue blocks
behind me
waiting for a moment when. . . .
Time to go home & cook supper & listen to
the romantic war news on the radio
. . . all movement stops
& I walk in the timeless sadness of existence,
tenderness flowing thru the buildings,
my fingertips touching reality's face,
my own face streaked with tears in the mirror
of some window -- at dusk --
where I have no desire
for bonbons -- or to own the dresses or Japanese
lampshades of intellection --
Confused by the spectacle around me,
Man struggling up the street
with packages, newspapers,
ties, beautiful suits
toward his desire
Man, woman, streaming over the pavements
red lights clocking hurried watches &
movements at the curb --
And all these streets leading
so crosswise, honking, lengthily,
by avenues
stalked by high buildings or crusted into slums
thru such halting traffic
screaming cars and engines
so painfully to this
countryside, this graveyard
this stillness
on deathbed or mountain
once seen
never regained or desired
in the mind to come
where all Manhattan that I've seen must disappear.

NY 1958



The music of the spheres -- that ends in Silence
The Void is a grand piano
a million melodies
one after another
silence in between
rather an interruption
of the silence
Tho the music's beautiful
Bong Bong Bon-----
gnob
gnob
gno-----



THE circle of forms
Shrinks
and disappears
back into the piano.

BATTLESHIP NEWSREEL

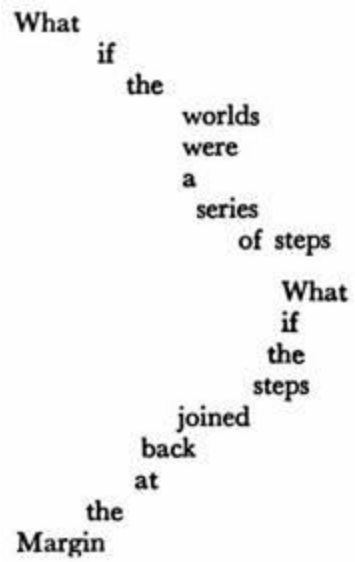
I was high on tea in my foc'sle near the forepeak hatch listening to the stars
envisioning the kamakazis flapping and turning in the soiled clouds
ackack burst into fire a vast hole ripped out of the bow like a burning lily
we dumped our oilcans of nitroglycerine among the waving octapi
dull thud and boom of thunder undersea the cough of the tuburcular machinegunner
flames in the hold among the cans of ether the roar of battleships far away
rolling in the sea like whales surrounded by dying ants the screams the captain mad
Suddenly a golden light came over the ocean and grew large the radiance entered the sky
a deathly chill and heaviness entered my body I could scarce lift my eye
and the ship grew sheathed in light like an overexposed photograph fading in the brain.

1959

I BEG YOU COME BACK & BE CHEERFUL

Tonite I got hi in the window of my apartment
chair at 3: AM
gazing at Blue incandescent torches
bright-lit street below
clotted shadows looming on a new laid pave
-- as last week Medieval rabbiz
plodded thru the brown raw
dirt turned over -- sticks
& cans
and tired ladies sitting on spanish
garbage pails -- in the deadly heat
-- one month ago
the fire hydrants were awash --
the sun at 3 P.M. today in a haze --
now all dark outside, a cat crosses
the street silently -- I meow
and she looks up, and passes a
pile of rubble on the way
to a golden shining garbage pail
(phosphor in the night
& alley stink)
(or door-can mash)
-- Thinking America is a chaos
Police clog the streets with their anxiety,
Prowl cars creak & halt:
Today a woman, 20, slapped her brother
playing with his infant bricks --
toying with a huge rock --
'Don't do that now! the cops! the cops!'
And there was no cop there --
I looked around my shoulder --
a pile of crap in the opposite direction.

Tear gas! Dynamite! Mustaches!
I'll grow a beard and carry lovely
bombs,
I will destroy the world, slip in between
the cracks of death
And change the Universe -- Ha!
I have the secret, I carry
Subversive salami in
my ragged briefcase
'Garlic, Poverty, a will to Heaven,'
a strange dream in my meat:
Radiant clouds, I have heard God's voice in
my sleep, or Blake's awake, or my own or
the dream of a delicatessen of snorting cows
and bellowing pigs --
The chop of a knife
a finger severed in my brain --
a few deaths I know --
O brothers of the Laurel
Is the world real?
Is the Laurel
a joke or a crown of thorns? --
Fast, pass
up the ass
Down I go
Cometh Woe
-- the street outside,
me spying on New York.
The dark truck passes snarling &
vibrating deep --



Leaving us flying like birds into Time
-- eyes and car headlights --
The shrinkage of emptiness
in the Nebulae
These Galaxies cross like pinwheels & they pass
like gas --
What forests are born.

September 15, 1959

TO AN OLD POET IN PERU

Because we met at dusk
Under the shadow of the railroad station
clock
While my shade was visiting Lima
And your ghost was dying in Lima
old face needing a shave
And my young beard sprouted
magnificent as the dead hair
in the sands of Chancay
Because I mistakenly thought you were
melancholy
Saluting your 60 year old feet
which smell of the death
of spiders on the pavement
And you saluted my eyes
with your anisetto voice
Mistakenly thinking I was genial
for a youth
(my rock and roll is the motion of an
angel flying in a modern city)
(your obscure shuffle is the motion
of a seraphim that has lost
its wings)
I kiss you on your fat cheek (once more tomorrow
Under the stupendous Disaguaderos clock)
Before I go to my death in an airplane crash
in North America (long ago)
And you go to your heart-attack on an indifferent
street in South America
(Both surrounded by screaming
communists with flowers
in their ass)
-- you much sooner than I --

or a long night alone in a room
in the old hotel of the world
watching a black door
. . . surrounded by scraps of paper
DIE GREATLY IN THY SOLITUDE
Old Man,
I prophesy Reward
Vaster than the sands of Pachacamac
Brighter than a mask of hammered gold
Sweeter than the joy of armies naked fucking on the battlefield
Swifter than a time passed between
old Nasca night and new Lima in the dusk
Stranger than our meeting by the Presidential Palace in an old cafe
ghosts of an old illusion, ghosts of indifferent love --
THE DAZZLING INTELLIGENCE
Migrates from Death
To make a sign of Life again to you
Fierce and beautiful as a car crash in the Plaza de Armas
I swear that I have seen that Light
I will not fail to kiss your hideous cheek when your coffin's closed
And the human mourners go back
to their old tired Dream.
And you wake in the Eye of the Dictator of the Universe.
Another stupid miracle! I'm mistaken again!
Your indifference! my enthusiasm! I insist! You cough!
Lost in the wave of Gold that flows thru the Cosmos.
Agh I'm tire of insisting! Goodby,
I'm going to Pucallpa to have Visions.
Your clean sonnets?
I want to read your dirtiest
secret scribblings,
your Hope,
in His most Obscene Magnificence. My God!

May 19, 1960

Note: *Chancay, Pachacamic, Nasca -- Pre-incaic cultures of coastal desert*

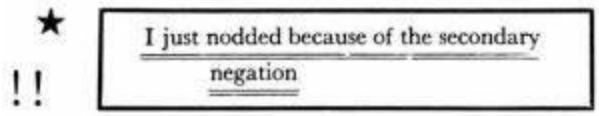
Peru. Myriad relics found by graverobbers opening the sand of these necropolises.

AETHER

11:15 PM May 27

4 Sniffs & I'm High,
Underwear in bed,
white cotton in left hand,
archtype degenerate,
bloody taste in my mouth
of Dentist Chair
music, Loud Farts of Eternity --
an owl with eyeglasses scribbling in the cold darkness --
All the time the sound in my eardrums of trolleycars below
taxi fender cough -- creak of streets --
Laughter & pistol shots echoing
at all walls --
tic leaks of neon -- the voice of Myriad
rushers of the Brainpan
all the chirps the crickets have created
ringing against my eares in the
instant before unconsciousness
before, --
the teardrop in the eye to come, --
the Fear of the Unknown --
One does not yet know whether Christ was
God or the Devil -Buddha is more reassuring.
Yet the experiments must continue!
Every possible combination of Being -- all
the old ones! all the old Hindu
Sabahadabadie-pluralic universes
ringing in Grandiloquent
Bearded Juxtaposition,
with all their minarets and moonlit
towers enlaced with iron
or porcelain embroidery,

all have existed --
and the Sages with
white hair who sat crosslegged on
a female couch --
hearkening to whatever music came
from out the Wood or Street,
whatever bird that whistled in the
Marketplace,
whatever note the clock struck to say
Time --
whatever drug, or aire, they breathed
to make them think so deep
or simply hear what passed,
like a car passing in the 1960 street
beside the Governmental Palace
in Peru, this Lima year I write.
Kerouac! I salute yr
wordy beard. Sad Prophet!
Salutations and low bows from
baggy pants and turbaned mind and hornèd foot
arched eyebrows & Jewish Smile --
One single specimen of Eternity -- each of us poets.
Breake the Rhythm! (too much pentameter)
. . . My god what solitude are you in Kerouac
now?
-- heard the whoosh of carwheels in the 1950 rain --
And every bell went off on time,
And everything that was created
Rang especially in view of the Creation
For
This is the end of the creation
This is the redemption Spoken of
This is the view of the Created
by all the Drs, nurses, etc of creation;
i.e.,



--
The unspeakable passed over my head for
the second time.
and still can't say it!
i.e. we are the sweepings of the moon
we're what's *left over* from perfection --
The universe is an OLD mistake
I've understood a million times before
and always come back to the same scissor brainwave--
The
Sooner or later all Consciousness will be eliminated
because Consciousness is
a by-product of --
(Cotton & N2O)
Drawing saliva back from the tongue --
Christ! you struggle to understand
One consciousness
& be confronted with Myriads --
after a billion years
with the same ringing in the ears
and pterodactyl-smile of Oops
Creation, known it all before.
A Buddha as of old, with sirens of
whatever machinery making cranging noises in
the street
and pavement light reflected in the facade
RR Station window in a
dinky port in Backwash
of the murky old forgotten
fabulous whatever
Civilization of
Eternity, --
with the RR Sta Clock ring midnight,
as of now,

& waiting for the 6th
you write your
Word,
and end on the last chime -- and remember
This *one* twelve was struck
before, and *never again*; both.
.....I stood on the balcony
waiting for an explosion
of Total Consciousness of the All --
being Ginsberg sniffing ether in Lima.
The same struggle of Mind, to reach the
Thing
that ends its process with an X
comprehending its befores and afters,
unexplainable to each, except in a prophetic
secret recollective hidden
half-hand unrecorded.
way.
As the old sages of Asia, or the white beards of Persia
scribbled on the margins of their scrolls
in delicate ink
remembering with tears the ancient clockbells of their
cities
and the cities that had been --
Nasca, Paracas, Chancay & Secrecy of the Priests
buried, Cat Gods
of all colors, a funeral shroud
for a museum --
None remember but all return to the same thought
before they die --what sad old
knowledge, we repeat again.
Only to be lost
in the sands of Paracas, or wrapped in a mystic shroud
of Poesy
and found by some kid in a thousand years
inspire what dreadful thoughts of his own?
It's a horrible, lonely experience. And Gregory's letter, and Peter's . . .

May 28 7:30 PM
...In the foul dregs of Circumstance
'Male and Female He created them' with mustaches.
There ARE certain REPEATED
(pistol shot) reliable points
of reference which the insane
(pistol shot repeated outside
the window) -- madman suddenly
writes -- THE PISTOL SHOT
outside -- the REPEATED situations
the experience of return to the
same place in Universal Creation
Time -- and every time we return
we recognise again that we
HAVE been here & that is the
Key to Creation -- the same pistol shot
-- DOWN, bending over his book of Un
intelligable marvels with his mustache.
(my) Madness is intelligable reactions to Unintelligable phenomena.
Boy -- what a marvellous bottle,
a clear glass sphere of transparent
liquid ether --
(Chloraethyl Merz)
9 PM
I know I am a poet -- in this universe -- but what
good does that do -- when in another, without these mechanical
aids, I might be doomed to be a poor Disneyan Shoe Store
Clerk -- This consciousness an *accident* of one of the Ether-
possible worlds, not the Final World
Wherein we all look Crosseyed
& triumph in our Virginity
without wearing Rabbit's-foot
ears or eyes looking sideways
strangely but in Gold
Humbled & more knowledgeable, acknowledge
the Vast mystery of our creation --

without giving any sign that
we have heard from the
GREAT CREATOR
WHOSE NAME I NOW
PRONOUNCE:
GREAT CREATOR OF THE UNIVERS, IF
THY WISDOM ACCORD IT
AND IF THIS NOT BE TOO
MUCH TO ASK
MAY I PUBLISH YOUR NAME?
I ASK IN THE LIMA
NIGHT
FEARFULLY WAITING ANSWER,

hearing the buses out on
the street hissing,
Knowing the Terror of the World Afar --
I have been playing with Jokes
and His is too mighty to hold
in the hand like a Pen
and His is the Pistol Shot Answer
that brings blood to the brain
And--
What *can* be possible
in a minor universe
in which you can see
God by sniffing the
gas in a cotton?
The answer to be taken in
reverse & Doubled Math
ematically *both* ways.
Am I a sinner?
There are hard & easy universes. This is neither.
(If I close my eyes will I regain consciousness?)
That's the Final Question -- with
all the old churchbells ringing and
bus pickup snuffles & crack of iron

whips inside cylinders & squeal of brakes
and old crescendos of responsive
demiurgic ecstasy whispering in streets of ear
-- and when was it Not
ever answered in the Affir-
mative? Saith the Lord?

A MAGIC UNIVERSE

Flies & crickets & the sound of buses & my
stupid beard.
But what's Magic?
Is there Sorrow in Magic?
Is Magic one of my boyscout creations?
Am I responsible? I with my flop?
Could Threat happen to Magic?
Yes! this the one universe in which
there *is* threat to magic, by
writing while high.
A Universe in which I am condemned to write statements.
'Ignorant Judgements Create Mistaken Worlds--'
and this one is joined in
Indic union to
Affirm with laughing
eyes --
The world is as we see it,
Male & Female, passing thru the years,
as has before & will, perhaps
with all its countless pearls & Bloody noses
and I poor stupid All in G
am stuck with that old Choice --
Ya, Crap, what Hymn to seek, & in
what tongue, if this's the most
I can requite from Consciousness? --
'That I can skim? & put in words?
Could skim it faster with more juice --
could skim a crop with Death, perchance
-- yet never know in this old world.

Will know in Death?
And before?
Will in
Another know.
And in another know.
And
in another know.
And
Stop conceiving worlds!
says Philip Whalen
(My Savior!) (oh what snobbery!)
(as if he cd save Anyone) --
At *least*, he won't understand.
I lift my finger in the air to create
a universe he won't understand, full
of sadness.
-- finally staring straight ahead in surprise
& recollection into the mirror of
the Hotel Commercio room.
Time repeats itself. Including
this consciousness, which has seen
itself before -- thus the locust-whistle
of antiquity's nightwatch in my eardrum . . .
I propounded a final question, and
heard a series of final answers.
What is God? for instance, asks the answer?
And whatever else can the replier reply but reply?
Whatever the nature of mind, that
the nature of *both* question and answer.
& yet one wants to live
in a *single* universe
Does one?
Must it be one?
Why, as with the Jews
must the God be One?
O what does
the concept ONE mean?

IT'S MAD!
GOD IS ONE!
IS X
IS MEANINGLESS --
ADONOI --
IS A JOKE --
THE HEBREWS ARE
WRONG -- (CRIST & BUDDA
ATTEST, also wrongly!)
What is One but Formation
of mind?
arbitrary madness! 6000 years
Spreading out in all directions simultaneously --
I forgive both good & ill
& I seek nothing, like a painted savage with
spear crossed by orange black & white bands!
'I found the Jivaros & was
entrapped in their universe'
I'm scribbling nothings.
Page upon page of profoundest nothing,
as scribed the Ancient Hebe, when
he wrote Adonoi Echad or One --
all to amuse, make money, or deceive --
Let Wickedness be Me
and this the worst of all
the universes!
Not the worst! Not Flame!
I can't stand that -- (Yes that's
for Somebody Else!
Yet I accept
O Catfaced God, whatever comes! It's me!
I am the Flame, etc.
O Gawd!
Pistol shot! Crack!
Circusmaster's whip --
IMPERFECT!
and a soul is damned to

HELL!
And the churchbell rings!
and there is melancholy, once again, throughout the realm.
and I'm that soul, small as it is.
HAVE FELT SAME BEFORE
The death of consciousness is terrible
and yet! when all is ended
what regret?
'S none left to remember or forget.
And's gone into the odd.
The only thing I fear is the Last
Chance. I'll see that last chance too
before I'm done, Old Mind. All them
old Last Chances that you knew before.
-- someday thru the dream wall
to nextdoor consciousness
like thru this blue hotel wall
-- millions of hotel rooms fogging
the focus of my eyes --
with whatever attitude I hold the cotton
to my nose, it's still a secret joke
with pinky akimbo, or with effete queer
eye in mirror at myself,
or serious-brow mein
& darkened beard,
I'm still the kid of obscene chance await-
ing --
breathing in a chinese Universe
thru the nose like some old Brahamic God.
O BELL TIME RING THY
MIDNIGHT FOR THE BILLIONTH
SOUNDY TIME, I HEAR AGAIN!
I'll go to walk the street,
Who'll find
me in the night, in Lima, in my
33'd year,
On Street (Cont.)

The souls of Peter &
I answer each other.
But -- and what's a soul?
To be a poet's a
serious occupation,
condemned to that
in universe --
to walk the city
ascribbling in
a book -- just accosted
by a drunk --
in Plaza de Armas
sidestreet under
a foggy sky, and
sometimes with no
moon.
The heavy balcony
hangs over the white
marble of the Bishop's
Palace next the Cathedral --
The fountain plays
in light as e'er --
The buss & the
motorcyclists pass
thru midnight, the
carlights shine
the beggar turns
a corner with his
cigarette stub &
cane, the Noisers
leave the tavern
and delay, conversing
in high voice,
Awake,
Hasta Manana
they all say --
and somewhere

at the other end of
the line, a telephone
is ringing, once again
with unknown news --
The night
looms over Lima,
sky black fog --
and I sit helpless
smoking with a
pencil hand --
The long crack
in the pavement
or yesterday's
Volcano in Chile,
or the day before
the Earthquake
that begat the
World.
The Plaza pavement
shines in the electric
light. I wait.
The lonely beard
workman staggers
home to bed from
Death.
Yes but I'm
a little tired of
being alone . . .
Keats' Nightingale -- the
instant of realization
a single consciousness
that hears the chimes
of Time, repeated
endlessly --
All night, w/ Ether, wave
after wave of magic
understanding. A dis-

turbance of the field
of consciousness.
Magic night, magic stars,
magic men, magic music,
magic tomorrow, magic death,
magic Magic.
What crude Magic
we live in (seeing trolley
like a rude monster
in downtown street
w/ electric diamond
wire antennae to sky
pass night café under
white arc-light by
Gran Hotel Bolivar.)
The mad potter of
Mochica made a
pot w/ 6 Eyes & 2
Mouths & half a Nose
& 5 Cheeks & no Chin
for us to figure out,
serious side-track,
blind alley Kosmos.
(Back in Room)
How the strange to remember anything, even a button
much less a universe.
'What creature gives birth to itself?'
The universe is mad, slightly mad.
-- and the two sides wriggle away
in opposite directions to die
lopped off
the blind metallic length curled up
feebly & wiggling its feet
in the grass
the millepede's black head moving inches away
on the staircase at Macchu Picchu
the Creature feels itself

destroyed,
head & tail of the universe
cut in two.
Men with slick mustaches of mystery have
pimp horrible climaxes & Karmas --
-- the mad magician that created Chaos
in the peaceful void & suave.
with my fucking suave manners & knowitall
eyes, and mind full of fantasy --
the Me! that horror that keeps me conscious
in this Hell of Birth & Death.
34 coming up -- I suddenly felt old -- sitting with
Walter & Raquel in Chinese Restaurant -- they kissed -- I alone
-- age of Burroughs when we first met.

Hotel Commercio
Lima, Peru
May 28, 1960